



# solutions

The quickest and best way to contact the EAP is by calling **1-800-222-0364**



## JOB PERFORMANCE ISSUES

### Overcoming the Obstacles

When the performance of one of your team members declines, it can impact the whole group. This month's edition of *Solutions* helps empower your workforce to overcome performance issues by examining:

- Employee productivity
- How to talk with an employee with performance issues
- Helping an employee get back on track

## Delve into Dialogue

Once you realize a team member's job productivity is declining, address issues sooner rather than later.

- **Be direct:** Calmly and gently describe the performance problems you've observed and how the results fall short of expectations.
- **Search for the root of the problem:** Ask your employee what he or she thinks might be causing issues. You might say, "I'd like to hear your thoughts on why these issues are present and how we may best address them." It's important to stay open-minded and try to understand your employee's unique situation.
- **Ask if you can help out:** Find out if there's anything more you can do to ensure the employee is fully equipped for the job. Perhaps he or she needs more training, is unclear of project priorities, or has too much on his or her plate.
- **Determine areas of improvement:** After discussing the employee's performance issue, suggest strategies for improvement (see "Plan for a Better Tomorrow").



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## Employee Productivity

The manager's job is to ensure that an employee is fully productive on the job. When an employee's productivity becomes problematic, consider the following:

### Ability

An employee productivity issue may stem from unclear or unrealistic expectations. Confusion over expectations—such as competing priorities or changes in delivery dates—can hamper completion of otherwise reasonably achievable requests. Additionally, the knowledge and skill set once required for a job may now be inadequate in today's rapidly changing workplace. A conversation with the employee and perhaps more training could significantly enhance job performance.

### Motivation

Employees may lose motivation when they are no longer satisfied with their jobs. To address this, foster a supportive and enthusiastic environment

with clearly-defined goals, readily available support, and timely, candid feedback that acknowledges successes and recognizes merit.

### External Factors

A difficult work environment, personal and family issues, or health problems

can also lead to reduced employee productivity. While managers cannot always help with such issues, the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) can. Your EAP can support workers through concerns relating to life at work and home, as well as support you as a manager when performance issues arise.



## Plan for a Better Tomorrow

After evaluating a performance concern, it's time to develop a plan for meeting productivity expectations. Routinely meet with your employee and offer regular feedback to create a supportive work environment that promotes improvement.

**1 Define categories for improvement:** Identify how your team member must perform better at work—perhaps it's better quality, timeliness, or communication skills.

**2 Identify satisfactory work:** Clearly map out expectations for the desired performance level to which you'd like your employee to rise.

**3 Meet regularly:** Be sure to keep up to date on how your employee is progressing by meeting frequently to review progress or any continuing issues. Strive to be encouraging and supportive.

Remember that your EAP can support you in keeping your team sharp, motivated, and effective at work. Management coaching

services are always available to supervisors for advice on management style, conflict resolution, and even dealing with specific performance issues. Don't hesitate to call EAP any time, day or night.

Employee Assistance Program  
24 HOURS A DAY  
**1-800-222-0364**

(TTY: 1-888-262-7848)

**FOH4You.com**

Services are offered as a **FREE** benefit to you and your family members, and are confidential within the limits of the law.